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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SCUL](#) [KPAL](#) [KDEM](#) [KWBG](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: MINISTER OF EDUCATION DENIES PA TEXTBOOKS CONTAIN
INCITEMENT

Classified By: Consul General Daniel Rubinstein
for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

11. (C) In a November 3 meeting, PA Minister of Education
Lamis Alami argued that most of the incitement-related
criticism levied against official PA textbooks cited
out-of-date Egyptian and Jordanian textbooks, which the PA
has since shelved or heavily edited. "The PA should be held
accountable for the texts it has sponsored," she argued, "not
for Egyptian or Jordanian texts no longer in use." She noted
that current PA textbooks were available on the PA's website
([www.pcdc.edu.ps](#) and [www.moe.gov.ps](#)). "We are not hiding
anything," she said. "Our textbooks are open for
international review. But for some Israelis, we're all
terrorists, and there is (Israeli) media reinforcement of
this stereotype."

12. (C) Alami said that despite allegations in the Israeli
media that PA textbooks contained incitement, the PA had "not
received one official complaint" from the GOI regarding
written material currently in the PA curriculum. "There are
some who do not want us to discuss historical Palestine," she
said. "And we're open to criticism. But let's be fair and
objective. Are we to abdicate our right to a Palestinian
heritage?" Alami noted that the over 50% of schools in East
Jerusalem which are administered by the Israeli Ministry of
Education or the Jerusalem Municipality purchased PA
textbooks and used them in their official curriculum, "with
the PA logo removed." UNRWA, Alami said, also used the PA
curriculum, and textbooks donated by the PA, in its own
schools.

13. (C) Asked about efforts to compare PA and Israeli
textbooks, and their respective compliance with the Roadmap
obligation to stop official incitement, Alami said, "We are
open to cooperation, but expect fair treatment. A parallel
review of Israeli textbooks is almost impossible, since their
system is not centralized -- there are five different
programs with over 10,000 textbooks used in their
curriculum." She noted that the PA Ministry Of Education had
recently formed a committee to review the whole of the PA
curriculum for content, including teaching of gender issues,
human rights, and democratic values, and that "our curriculum
is broader than just our textbooks -- we have courses on
human rights education, democracy, accountability, and
transparency."

14. (SBU) Background: Current PA textbooks were developed
during 1996-2006. Before that, West Bank schools taught a
curriculum based on Jordanian textbooks, and Gaza schools
taught a curriculum based on Egyptian textbooks. Since 1967,
both curricula had been subject to review and censorship by
Israeli military authorities. PA officials, among others,
criticized a 2000 review of PA textbooks by the Center for
Monitoring the Impact of Peace for basing its review on

un-revised Egyptian and Jordanian texts, and for citing them selectively. A 2004 review by the Israel-Palestine Center for Research and Information found that while PA textbooks were "generally conceived with a nationalist framework," the (new) curriculum reviewed did not feature overt exhortation to violence.

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